SARON NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook:www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

The Rev. Joan Oleson, Pastor
Home: 269-983-2475
Email: *oleson@saronlutheran.org*

Marcus Roll, Senior Choir Director,
Bell Choir Director
Email: roll1mc@gmail.com
Irma Gorman, Organist
Amanda Bradley, Administrative
Assistant
Megan Savage, Financial Secretary
Email: financial@saronlutheran.org
Emily Gaul, Child Care

Typical Sunday Schedule at Saron:
During the School Year:
8:30 & 11:00 A.M. Worship
Childcare provided
9:40 Learning for Ages 2 – Adult

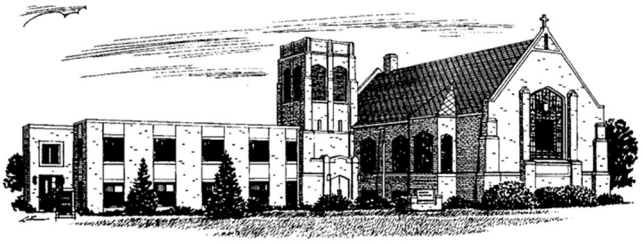
Summer of 2021 (thru Labor Day weekend):
Zoom and On-Location
10:00 Holy Communion
No Childcare provided at this time
No Learning Hour

All are welcome!

We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the
North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Episcopal Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia

Saron's Mission:
Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!



August 2021

It is almost hard to keep up these days. At least that is my reality. I am ready for summer to begin, and it is already the end of July. Plans are being made for the Fall. Pandemic guidelines are constantly being revisited and updated. But yes, I have also enjoyed some quality family time with visits from our daughters and their families. There have been many a walk along the lake. "Keeping up" sometimes involves stopping and intentionally noticing a change in routine, or season, or a new blossom in the garden. I am reminded of the verse from "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" that goes like this…

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest, sun, moon and stars on their courses above join with all nature and manifold witness to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love.
…Morning by morning new mercies I see; all I have needed thy hand hath provided; great is they faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

My prayer is that we all may be aware of God's new mercies that surround us each and every day.

Pastor Joan

UPDATES ON RESTRICTIONS – Our guidelines remain as they were in July. There are no restrictions on numbers for Sunday morning worship. However, if you are not fully vaccinated, we ask that you continue to wear a mask. If you are vaccinated and want to wear a mask for any reason, please do so. We will not mandate physical distancing or register attendees for contact tracing purposes. We continue with no congregational singing. There will be no childcare, at least through the summer. And, if you have any symptoms of illness, we encourage you to stay at home. We will continue to have Zoom worship, besides our in-the-building worship. Saron's leadership will re-visit these guidelines at their August council meeting.

INTERN – We look forward to welcoming Vicar Patrick Blanchard on September 1. An internship committee is being formed. Details to come as well as a full introductory newsletter article in next month's newsletter.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL – August 9-12. See details and invitation on page four.

PRAYER GROUP will return to in-the-building after Labor Day. We will meet at 11 a.m. on Mondays in the sanctuary.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED – Are you good with indoor plants? Are you available and willing to water and care for the plants at Saron on a regular basis? If so, contact Pastor or Amanda.

Caring and Sharing

In Our Prayers –

Richard Schalon is at the Whitcomb Tower Retirement Center, St. Joseph; **Bernice Koski** and **Kathleen Preston** at Woodland Terrace, Bridgman.

Office Hours at Saron (may vary during Covid-19)
Amanda Bradley (admin assistant):
Mondays & Thursdays 8:00am-noon
Wednesdays as needed
Helping Hands Office Volunteers:
Wednesdays 9:15am-11am (approx)
Megan Savage (bookkeeper):
Tuesdays & Thursdays 5:30pm
financial@saronlutheran.org
When Pastor is out of town, emergency pastoral care information can be obtained by calling the church office (269/983-1273) or contacting the council president.

Note: Emails for Pastor should be addressed to oleson@saronlutheran.org to ensure privacy. Emails to Amanda and the church office should be sent to info@saronlutheran.org.

Happy Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members!
August 2021

Aug	1	Bradley Gorman
	2	Joseph Ulrey
	3	Tim Standen
		Ted Dosch
	4	Linda Huff
	5	Brian Hohman
		Emma Dipert
	7	Ed Standen
	9	Benjamin Baumgartner
		Mary Smart
	14	Maggie Hammer
	15	David Bailey
	16	Tedd Gorman
	20	Diana Dubman
	22	Irma Gorman
	23	Andrew Huff
	24	Rebecca (Fortenbacher) Sherry
		Paula Risetter
	27	Pamela Olson

Happy Anniversary Wishes to Saron's Members!
August 2021

Aug	1	Matthew & Laurel Gacek
	3	David & Dana Riley
	6	Jerry & Ruth Stelling
	7	Brad & Marilyn Frey
		Victor & Nicole Coar
	8	Erik & Brittany (Ondraka) Hansen
	14	Donald & Eloise Moely
	15	John & T.J. Koehler
	20	David & Shelly Stankiewicz

"God's Blessings for a very happy day and year round!"

If there is anyone who has been omitted, or, if the dates are incorrect from the birthday and anniversary list, please call the church office at 269/983-1273. Thank you.

With Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to Becky Bucha upon the death of her special friend, Tom Palmer on July 17, 2021. Tom was a frequent guest at Saron. A memorial service is planned for Friday, July 30 at 11:00am at Starks & Menchinger Chapel in St. Joseph with visitation at 10:00am.

God is our refuge and strength. Psalm 46:1a

Memorial Services Scheduled

Due to Covid, the following memorial services were delayed until we could gather again:

The service for Betty Ross, a longtime member of Saron, will be on Monday, August 9 at 11:00am at Saron.

Baptisms

Our best wishes and God's blessings to:

Emmett O'Connor Gray-Roll and Thatcher O'Connor Gray-Roll, sons of Marcus Roll and Beth Gray-Roll upon their baptisms on July 18. Godparents are Lucas and Emily Roll.

Joni Theodora Skudlarczyk, daughter of Jon & Gretchen Skudlarczyk and granddaughter of Jim and Pastor Joan Oleson. Joni was baptized on July 20. Godparents are Alissa Oleson & Aaron Cohen.

Thank You!

July 11, 2021

Dear members of Saron,
Dave and I and our family who were watching on Zoom, would like to thank you for the amazing out pouring of love today, June 27, 2021 and over these 40 years of service to this congregation. Thank you, Pastor Joan, for the lovely retirement message and the Church Council for the reception, refreshments and fellowship. I also want to thank all the former pastors and interns that have reached out to wish me well on my retirement.
I would like to thank the congregation for the many cards, notes and gifts among them the rose bush and the group picture frame, that will always remind me of my time spent here with you. I feel blessed to have been a part of this family and each of you will always hold a special place in my heart.

Yours in Christ, Margaret A Froehlich

FORTIFY & fly

Is our money making a difference? Lutheran Disaster Response has certainly been grateful for the portion of our chartable tithe and it could not have come at a more appropriate time. In the last 18 months, they have expended 35% more in resources than it received through gifts and grants. Between Covid-19 and changing weather patterns making disasters more frequent and destructive, the need for disaster relief is more crucial than ever. Lutheran Disaster Response is present during every phase of the disaster cycle, walking with survivors and their communities through the journey of recovery. Our support through our prayers and financial gifts help make this possible!

Thank you for your continued giving to the Fortify & Fly Campaign. As of the end of June, we had collected $353,447 towards our 3-year pledge total of $367,205. We are at 96%!

Worship

FACEBOOK

We love to share pictures of Saron's ministry on our Facebook page and we get great feedback. It is our practice not to put names with the pictures. If you have questions, or prefer your picture not to appear, please contact Pastor.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

Sun. August 1 —
Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15
Psalm 78:23-29
Ephesians 4:1-16
John 6:24-35

Sun. August 8 —
Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
1 Kings 19:4-8
Psalm 34:1-8
Ephesians 4:25-5:2
John 6:35, 41-51

Sun. August 15 —
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
Proverbs 9:1-6
Psalm 34:9-14
Ephesians 5:15-20
John 6:51-58

Sun. August 22 —
Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18
Psalm 34:15-22
Ephesians 6:10-20
John 6:56-69
Sun. August 29 —
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9
Psalm 15
James 1:17-27
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Youth

Great News! It has been a long time and we have missed each of you so we are very excited to announce that we are beginning to plan Saron's Youth Group Gatherings. Our target is September. Please pencil these dates on your calendar and as soon as we are able, we will confirm the dates are official:
September 19, October 17, November 14, December 12

We will plan on meeting for two hours beginning 30 minutes after the last service (this will most likely be 12:30pm).

Hoping to take advantage of nice weather, we are planning an outdoor activity for the kick-off in September. Stay tuned for more updates at church and via email. Gear up for some fun, fellowship and food with your friends! We can't wait to see you!

Blessings,
Youth Committee

For more info, contact Merrily at
merrilyannsmith@gmail.com

LEARNING

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

Vacation Bible School
VBS will be hosted by Saron August 9 – 12 at 6:30pm-8:30pm. We will stay outdoors as much as the weather allows. To sign up your child, grandchild, other relative or friend of your children, use our online option via the link in the weekly email or contact the office at 269/983-1273 or by email at info@saronlutheran.org.

Saron Lutheran Church Presents
GOING BEYOND THE GOLD:
Be on Team Jesus
heart
strength
neighbor
soul
mind
An Olympic themed Vacation Bible School experience with a focus on outdoor activities and learning to work together to be part of Team Jesus.
Music, crafts, snacks, activities, and so much more!
Monday, August 9th - Thursday, August 12th
6:30pm - 8:30pm
Open to Preschool - 5th Grade
Contact Saron to register: 269/983-1273
Members, non-members, friends, cousins, neighbors... All are welcome!

We are looking for one more volunteer to facilitate an outdoor activity on Tuesday (8/10). If you would like to help, please use the link in our weekly email or contact the office so Amanda can sign you up.

Education Hour
Our plans are to restart gatherings after Labor Day. Sunday School is for those preschool - 5th grade and Confirmation Class is intended for 6th - 8th grade. There is also a wonderful High School/Adult opportunity. The Education Hour has not been finalized but will most likely be from 9:40am - 10:30am as in previous years. We look forward to seeing everyone!

We are always looking for volunteers to teach Sunday School, even just once. Please contact the church office at 269/983-1273 or by email at info@saronlutheran.org with any interest.

Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study
We are now meeting in the lounge of the church to discuss the next week's gospel. We'll start at 6:00pm as usual and will have discussion until about 7:00pm. Those who want to can then join the others at Azul Tequila for something to eat and more conversation.

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL TUESDAYS

"Iron Sharpens Iron and One Person Sharpens the Wits of Another"

If you have any questions, feel free to call, text or email:
Bob Kynast at 269/921-2786 or bobkynast@gmail.com
Don Hafer at 269/985-3637

1ST SUNDAY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

We are taking our yearly summer vacation from gathering, but not reading. Here are the 2021-2022 books we have chosen for good discussions starting again in October. October 3, 2021: ANXIOUS PEOPLE, by Fredrik Backman. November 7, 2021: SAVE ME THE PLUMS, by Ruth Reichl. December 5, 2021: THE BOOK OF LOST FRIENDS by Lisa Wingate. February 13, 2022: RADIUM GIRLS by Kate Moore. March 6, 2022: 100 DAYS OF HAPPINESS by Fausto Brizzi. April 3, 2022: FOUR WINDS by Kristen Hannah. May 1, 2022: THE MIDNIGHT LIBRARY by Matt Haig.

Join us in the fall for good reads, good discussions and good times simply being together. All are welcome at any session.

"Here's to good books, the cheapest vacation you can buy". (Charlaine Harris)

Men's monthly Bible Devotions and Breakfast

Men's Bible Devotion will not meet in August. Contact Dennis Lundgren with any questions at dennis.lundgren@me.com.

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Our Thursday study continues into the summer. We will meet outdoors at Saron on Thursday mornings at 9:30am. We will also continue to Zoom for those who would like to join in that way. Let Pastor know if you would like the Zoom info. Our study each week will be on the upcoming Sunday's Gospel lesson. Please bring a lawn chair for seating.

Women of the ELCA

Deborah Circle met at the Lakehouse in June for a fellowship dinner and had a nice turnout of 15 people. We have decided to start meeting in the church lounge, beginning with our next meeting on Wednesday, September 8 at 7pm. Denise Cook will be the study leader. We will NOT meet in August.

There will also be meetings on Wednesday, October 13 and Wednesday, November 10 (Church Women's Annual Meeting). Zoom is still available for those wishing to attend online. Contact Melanie McCammon for more information at 269/983-4622

Hospitality

We are excited to start having snack providers again for a time of fellowship in the narthex after the service. We are asking for donations of individually packaged treats only at this time. Please plan for 40. You can sign up via the link in our weekly email or call/email the office so Amanda can sign you up. Thank you!

Outreach

BENTON HARBOR SOUP KITCHEN

Most Soup Kitchen guests fall into the following categories: 1) homeless, 2) living below the poverty line, 3) come to see friends, 4) stopping by today with thanks for past service. - Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen Newsletter

On May 27th, 110 people enjoyed a sack lunch prepared by four volunteers from Saron. Mary Alice Brunner, Colleen Lundgren, and Dave & Kathie Bradley prepared & assembled the lunches which included hot dogs, an apple, chips and cookies baked by Keith Stevens, Karen Hinckley, Brad Frey, Judi Huff and Karen Johnson.

If you feel comfortable helping to prepare a sack lunch at the Soup Kitchen or baking cookies, please sign up via the link in our weekly email or by contacting Kathie Bradley (269-921-4665).

The Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen has served over 500,000 meals in the past 10 years!!!

Thank you to all who continue to support this ministry with your time, contributions, & prayers. During this pandemic it is even more important to continue Saron's mission of *Joyfully sharing God's love for all!*

INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE

The Inclusivity Task Force continues to look for opportunities to extend a welcome to all, especially those listed in our proposed welcome statement, which is printed below. The council has tentatively scheduled a vote on the statement for September 26. An affirmative vote would make Saron a Reconciling in Christ congregation. More details to come!

If you have any questions, please feel free to call any one of the task force members, as listed here.

Connor Ashley: cashley1837@outlook.com
Laurel Gacek: 269/470-6062 or mlmg2445@sbcglobal.net
Laura Hicks: 517/930-0579 or lhicks42@gmail.com
Darlene Kiessel: 269/313-4062 or kiessel@me.com
Diane Madej (Open Hearts. Open Church, N/WLM Synod): 231/670-0328 or dianemadej234@gmail.com
Pastor Joan Oleson: 269/983-1273 or oleson@saronlutheran.org

Here is Saron's proposed Welcome Statement, as affirmed by the council.
"As a community of faith who joyfully shares God's love for all, we believe our lives and faith are strengthened by diversity. We strive to be a community who welcomes people of every ability, age, citizenship status, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, language, marital status, political perspective, race, and sexual orientation. Whatever life's circumstance, we openly welcome and value you. We celebrate God's unconditional love and respond joyfully to your presence here. All are welcome. You are welcome."

Interfaith Action

Interfaith Action (swmichiganinterfaith.org) is a coalition of over 40 faith communities in Allegan, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, and Van Buren Counties. Some members of Saron attend their meetings and work with various task force groups. One of the goals of Interfaith Action is to promote understanding and respect for diversity. We hope this discussion will advance that goal by enriching our appreciation for our shared humanity.

Climate Change and Migration:
What it means for southwest Michigan and crafting a faithful response
Wednesday, September 15, 2021, Pilgrim Congregational Church, St. Joseph, MI
Further details about remote Zoom will be forthcoming
Presenters: Kayly Ober, Keith Schneider, (https://rb.gy/lhme3s) 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Training for speaking to legislators, Katerina Parsons, 7:30-8:30 p.m.
Interfaith Action
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Great Lakes

Support

The Support Committee will continue meeting on the second Monday of each month at **8:00 pm**. Meetings will continue to be held on Zoom.

Contact Don Hafer with any questions at 269/985-3637.

STOCK DONATIONS

Saron partners with TD Ameritrade, a brokerage firm, to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, email Joe Ulrey at josephulrey@yahoo.com to receive more information. Thanks!

Facilities

Helping Hands (Previously Golden Hammers)

We do all sorts of things from building maintenance to preps for worship in the sanctuary to assembling bulletins and newsletters and so much more. Watch for details about when this newly renamed group will begin their work again and know that you are invited – whatever your age, gender, or ability. There will be a job for you to use your helping hands.

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
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A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Margaret's Retirement Recognition

The Music Room with a new curtain and new music filing system

August 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5** 9:30am Bible Study	**6**	7 **NO** 9:00am Men's Bible Devotion Meeting
8 Worship at 10:00am On-location & Zoom	9 11:00am Betty Ross Mem Serv 8:00pm Support 6:30pm VBS	**10** 6:00pm Men's Bible Study 6:30pm VBS	**11** 11:00am Zoom Coffee Hour 6:30pm VBS	**12** 9:30am Bible Study 6:30pm VBS	**13**	14
15 Worship at 10:00am On-location & Zoom	**16** 11:00am Prayer Time (in homes) 7:00pm Council Meeting **Newsletter Articles Due**	**17** 6:00pm Men's Bible Study	**18** 11:00am Zoom Coffee Hour	**19** 9:30am Bible Study	**20** Pastor On Vacation →	21
22 Worship at 10:00am On-location & Zoom	**23** 11:00am Prayer Time (in homes)	**24** 6:00pm Men's Bible Study	**25** 11:00am Zoom Coffee Hour	**26** 9:30am Bible Study	**27**	28
29 Worship at 10:00am On-location & Zoom	**30** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Time (in homes)	**31** 6:00pm Men's Bible Study				